1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

lighter punishments are administered by the mother, who deals with the minor faults and offences of her children. All serious offences and persistent defiance of the mother's authority are reported by her to the father. Very often the mother's threat that she would report the matter to the father is enough to set the recalcitrant children right. In point of fact, many mothers build up the father as a figure to be feared, and in some instances the children actually tremble when they are produced before him for disobedience and other improper conduct. The punishments inflicted by the father on his children are less frequent but more severe. But from the above it should not be surmised that the children's attitude towards the father is only that of fear, for that would obviously be wrong. Fear and respect there certainly are, but not without a definite feeling of confidence and friendship for him. While difficulties are more often referred to and help sought from the mother, the father is not unapproachable, and indeed many fathers teach their children new games, make them small playthings, occasionally take them out for sight-seeing, buy them sweets and other tit-bits, and on demand give them a little money too.

During later childhood and adolescence the girls draw themselves closer and closer to the mother and occupy themselves mainly with feminine pursuits. The boys continue to maintain close and intimate relations with the mother, but her authority over them gradually diminishes. They learn to coax and cajole her. They know her weaknesses and devise ingenious ways to tease her. She often threatens to bring matters to the notice of the father, but the boys know very well that in all probability the threat will not be carried out. But during this period the father watches the development of his sons with greater interest and when complaints are brought to him the punishment is often exemplary. Traditionally this is believed to be the period when 'boys go tough' and are difficult to manage, and it is during this phase that the father must exercise tact and firmness in keeping them under control. They must keep the right sort of company, and should not be allowed to spend all their time playing and planning mischief. Even if they go to the village school, they should give some time to their traditional caste occupations. By assisting their elders and seeing them at work they should be able to acquire the fundamentals of what in all likelihood is going to be their main vocation

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

in life. Indirect education through folktales, parables and songs is now supplemented by direct and conscious instruction by the parents. The mother seeks to train her daughter to be a good wife; she would often say to her, 'The husband's home is very different from the home of your parents. Here you sit down and the meals are served to you by your mother; there even if you work to the point of breaking your limbs you will not have a word of appreciation. And if you do not work, your tormenting mother-in-law and sisters-in-law will not only abuse you, but will also remember your parents in the foulest language.' Through anecdotes and reminiscences, she creates a vivid picture in the daughter's mind of what she is likely to find when she leaves her first home to enter her second and real home. As the time for the girl's marriage approaches, she finds herself attached to the mother all the more. If the father disapproves of any of the ways of the girl seriously, rather than speak to her directly, he would bring the matter to the notice of her mother, through whom he would seek to influence the daughter. Of course on minor matters he can speak to her directly. Similarly, in the case of grown-up boys, when any action more serious than a mere warning, use of strong language or giving of a threat is called for it is the father and not the mother who is supposed to handle them.

When the children enter their youth and adulthood, there are further changes in the pattern of inter-personal relationships between the parents and children. By this time the girls are married off and leave the parental home to take their place as wives in the homes of their respective husbands. For three or four years they maintain a somewhat intimate and regular contact with their parental home, and their people too are interested in their adjustment and welfare in the new surroundings. Afterwards, however, the girl gets increasingly absorbed in the affairs of her own home, and the memories of childhood friends, as well as those of her parental home, gradually recede into the background. In later years, on ceremonial occasions she returns to her parental home more or less a stranger. Not that the parents are totally unconcerned about the welfare of their daughter, or that the girl has altogether forgotten them, but the distance that separates them (in time and space) gradually takes away much of the glow and warmth of the feelings which they have for one another. On the other hand, the boys also marry and their wives come home to

LEVELS OF LIVING

Caste is an important and rigid determinant of division of labour. Under this system several occupations have been preserved as caste monopolies, while some are 'open' and may be adopted by persons belonging to all castes. This system of division of labour by occupation has been examined at some length in Chapter III.

The factors of sex, age and social status govern the division of labour in nearly all types of work in the community. First, 'masculine' and 'feminine' pursuits are clearly distinguished: a woman doing man's work is laughed at; a man undertaking any specifically feminine tasks provides a favourite theme for popular gossip. Household work, agricultural activities, traditional craft or occupation of the family, and socio-religious rites and ceremonies are all marked by division of work on the basis of sex.

The age factor is equally important, but not so rigid. Six basic age divisions are recognized in the society: (i) 'Infant' from birth to weaning. (ii) 'Child' from weaning to about twelve. (iii) 'Grown-up boys or girls' from twelve until marriage or even a year or two later. (iv) 'Grown-up people' from twenty to about thirty-eight. (v) Middle-aged from about thirty-eight to fifty. (vi) 'Aged', over fifty. Each of these age divisions carries with it a more or less recognized status which determines the nature and quantity of work to be done by the individual in question. Only in the lower strata of the community we find the 'child' burdened with a regular share in domestic and occupational tasks. The children in the families on upper levels may occasionally do odd bits of work, but no responsibility is thrust on them. As they grow up, girls have to take an increasing interest in domestic tasks. 'Grown-up boys and girls' must seriously start 'learning to do things', and are gradually entrusted with some responsibility. However, it is on the 'grown-up people' that the main responsibility of 'doing all the work' and running the affairs of the household rests. The 'middle-aged' people continue to do a part of the practical work; but their time is more occupied by planning, direction and supervision. Depending on their age and personality, the 'aged' continue to supervise and direct the work of the younger members. As they grow older they content themselves merely by giving suggestions and eventually retire from active work or its planning, and devote their time mostly to their grandchildren.

Considerations of general social status also determine the nature

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

the Erkalas, the men occupy themselves with hunting and trapping, while women weave mats and seek some additional income by fortune-telling. Among the Madigas males deal with dead animals; women come into the picture only when the meat has to be carried home and cooked. Both men and women may work at curing hides. Shoe-making and other leather-work is mainly done by men. On ritual and ceremonial occasions, musical instruments are played only by Madiga men.

Earlier it has been pointed out that men avoid tasks which are generally known as 'feminine'; and women in their turn are expected not to undertake pursuits which are traditionally regarded as 'masculine'. It is true that during the illness or absence of his wife, a man has to perform some of her domestic duties, but that is obviously a compromise with necessity. Any man taking undue interest in feminine tasks soon earns the unenviable epithet of 'half-woman', and is exposed to the ridicule of the community. Asking a man to do some feminine work would be almost tantamount to questioning his masculinity. 'Put bangles on your wrist, husk the paddy and cook the meals', is a remark often used in reproach to admonish those who lack manly qualities and courage. A woman going out of her way to do anything which is regarded as 'man's work' is noticed and adversely commented upon by the society. It is unthinkable that a woman can handle the plough. It should be pointed out here that sometimes a woman deliberately undertakes to do masculine work to 'bring home' to the husband the realization that he is not fulfilling his manly obligations and thus to awaken him to his proper responsibilities. Middle-aged women and widows can do some men's work without social censure.

Reference has been made to the six basic age divisions recognized in the community. Among the 'rich' and the 'well-to-do' families children do very little; but among the 'average' and the 'poor' they have to help the parents. Grazing the cattle, assisting parents in their work in the fields during the busy season, looking after younger siblings, and running errands are regarded as children's work. The girls have to help their mother in the kitchen. As they grow up their share in work gradually increases. Boys take more interest in 'outdoor' work, whilst girls are absorbed in the domestic routine. During this stage of life the 'grown-up boys and girls' even of rich and well-to-do families have to apply

883 themselves to work. The major responsibility rests on the adults
[885] and the middle-aged people, and here the social status of the persons concerned will determine the type of work to be done by them.

461 This brings us to social status as a determinant in the division
565 of work in the community. The rich and influential people will not do anything which is regarded as humble or is otherwise classed as menial work. The men on this level generally 'plan and supervise', but the hard manual labour is done by hired labourers. They go to their fields, but only stand in a corner and instruct the servants. They will never be seen taking their plough and the bullocks to the field, or even participating in ploughing or sowing. The popular conception regarding women at this level is 'they sit in their homes loaded with gold and silver, whiling away their time chewing betel leaves and areca nuts.' However, even in these homes, women are never idle, for they have to do the cooking and look after the children. But considerations of respectability prevent them from doing several things which their counterparts in the lower strata of society regard as their normal day-to-day work. They can never be seen going to their fields, carrying headloads, drawing water from public wells, or washing clothes in public places. In fact they do not have to do any work outside their homes and are not expected to earn for the upkeep of the
[562] family. The rich Muslim women observe *purdah*, i.e. they never go out of their house without a veil, and considerations of respectability demand that their sphere of activity should strictly be confined to their houses. The situation is materially different in the case of the 'well-to-do' families, but no generalizations can be made regarding this level as a unit, as the social ideals and standards of different castes differ very widely. In general, however, it may be said that the Brahmin and the Komti, being higher castes and respected people in the village, more or less follow the ideals of the rich and refrain from doing heavy manual labour as well as from all other work traditionally regarded as inferior. This is true also of the Muslims on this level who, because of their urban conceptions of middle-class respectability, think it below their dignity to do any inferior work publicly. The women from the above three groups seek to emulate the examples of the women in rich families. But in the other well-to-do families belonging to the agricultural and occupational castes notions of respectability

1 [WORKING. --ANALYST]

LIVING TOGETHER

point of rubbing genital organs. Girls masturbate either by pressing and releasing their clitoris with their fingers or by rubbing their thighs. Obscenity and talk about sex are disapproved by the elders, but the boys regard it as a mark of toughness and as an indication of their grown-up status, and as such indulge in it fairly regularly. Their vocabulary of abuse includes all the major sexual words, and they can often be heard abusing each other in terms such as: 'Copulate with your mother', 'Cohabit with your sister', 'My penis!'—or the rather curious 'Your mother's penis'.

Most children's games involve competition in the use of skills and stamina. The children are divided into several groups and factions, and these often come into conflict on account of intense jealousies and rivalries. Elaborate group *mores* and codes of ethics govern their inter-relations during states of friendship, neutrality and enmity. Toughness in boys is the admired quality; weakness, refined ways, spying and complaining coming in for criticism and ridicule. Running away from fright, crying and treachery to the group are remembered long after the quarrels and restoration of peace between conflicting factions. Outside the play-group the growing children have to lend a helping hand to their parents. Grown-up girls assist their mothers at their domestic tasks and take partial charge of their younger siblings, while boys do odd jobs for the father and other older male relatives. It is now time that they should take their first steps in preparing for adult life.

Adolescence brings about a significant change in the life of both boys and girls. By this age girls are expected to become proficient in all the major domestic tasks. Negotiations for their marriage are invariably started at this age. They grow up faster than the boys. While boys of a comparable age are still regarded as 'grown-up children who do not understand', girls come to be looked upon more or less as fully-grown women. Now they must be careful about their dress; particularly their breasts should never be exposed. They should 'not run about the village like boys', nor should they talk or laugh so loudly as to attract notice. Mothers advise them to be cautious in their behaviour, for this is the age when young people start giving attention to them. Young people have a special fascination for adolescent girls 'whose youth is just beginning to blossom'. Young men succeeding in fondling 'the unripe, half-developed breasts' of a girl and in having intercourse with one 'whose pubic hair is just beginning to grow' easily win the

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

admiration of their age-group. For the girls it is a rather difficult period, as they have to find a middle way between the dictates of their romantic impulses and the fear of the social censure that comes to all wayward girls. Adolescent boys divide their time more or less equally between 'learning to do things' with their parents and being with their playmates. Childish games in the dust are now replaced by more vigorous country sport. Within the age-group itself thoughts and efforts in the domain of sex come to occupy a very important place. Masturbation is now regarded as 'unmanly' and gradually given up. Lying with other boys is also looked down upon. Efforts are made to attract younger girls for first experimentation in heterosexual love. Far more than these actual experiments, fantasies occupy an important place in their thoughts and conversation. Imaginary affairs with a woman believed to be of easy virtue—or with a completely fictitious character from a distant village—are vividly and elaborately described. Growth of the pubic hair and genital organs is closely watched and compared. In this way they slowly reach their youth when talks for their marriage are opened. On marriage they acquire a new social status.

After marriage the young men and women have to give considerable attention to their economic pursuits and crafts, and as such they have relatively little time left for group activity. Yet, their leisure and time are generally spent in the company of persons belonging more or less to the same age-group, who constitute 'a set of friends'. Important activities of these groups include loafing, playing card games, gossip and conversation. They may even go to the city together; and always act in unison when planning mischief. Confidences are exchanged within these groups; and people often narrate to each other their recent exploits. One of the favourite themes is boasting regarding success in sexual adventures. Success—real or imaginary—with an adolescent girl is vividly described within this narrow circle. Graphic and vivid details are always added to make the account more colourful. 'It was her very first experience. Oh, there was so much blood. I did not know whether to pacify her or to concentrate on the act', one would say. This would start a chain in which all others would narrate their parallel experiences—many of which would be slightly modified editions of often-told tales. The *motif* of a girl being frightened by the largeness of a man's organ also